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NAIROBI FOR SFO  
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SUBJECT: First Darfur-Darfur Dialogue and Consultation  
Workshop Held in South Darfur

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Summary  
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¶1. The UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) Civil Affairs unit held the first in a series of planned workshops to launch conflict resolution initiatives through the Darfur-Darfur Dialogue and Consultation (DDDC) process in Nyala, South Darfur, on July 5. The primary goal of the workshop was to review the main provisions of the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA), introduce and explain the DDDC, and discuss the DDDCQs relationship with rule of law, traditional conflict resolution mechanisms, and sustainable peace. Participants demonstrated that meaningful discussion of key issues in the DPA and DDDC is achievable. Recommendations for improving future workshops include incorporating better understanding of the DDDCQs role, goals, and expected accomplishments and ensuring that attendees receive a copy of the DPA. These workshops are not being fully coordinated with the AU, but UNMIS seems to be moving ahead under the guise of its civil affairs program. End summary.

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DDDC Workshop Sparks Lively Debate  
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¶2. UNMIS Civil Affairs held the first in a series of planned workshops to launch conflict resolution initiatives through the DDDC process in Nyala, South Darfur, on July 5. Dr. Abdul Jabar Fadul, a professor at the University of Fasher and expert on traditional conflict mediation, facilitated the workshop. Thirty participants attended the workshop, including the local chairman and representatives of the National Committee for Peace and Reconciliation comprising National Congress Party and Umma Party members, the chief facilitator for the Sudanese governmentQs reconciliation initiatives, local non-governmental organizations, lawyers, persons affiliated with universities, and other members of civil society organizations. Only one of the participants was a woman, although two other women had been invited to attend.

¶3. Participants immediately and repeatedly questioned the purpose and usefulness of the DDDC, particularly when the DPA has no provisions to allow for amendments. Workshop attendees also discussed ways in which the DDDC can improve the DPA and thus address why some persons

reject the agreement based on claims that the DPA lacks Darfur ownership and does not represent war-affected and displaced persons. Suggestions included discussions of adequate compensation and emphasis on security arrangements. Participants agreed the DDDC may help to address long-standing tribal tensions, but will not help to promote the DPA because people believe that the DPA was not written by or for the majority of Darfurians.

¶4. Several other topics also sparked energetic and sometimes frustrated debate. After a review of the UN Development Program's Rule of Law program, participants agreed that laws in Darfur are not respected, with some attendees remarking that laws only apply to ordinary citizens and not to persons in power or government. In addition, while discussing theoretical components of analyzing conflict and seeking resolution, participants argued that the DPA emerged simply due to the international community's efforts to stop the fighting in Darfur and not as a real attempt to solve the Darfur conflict. Participants also questioned the effectiveness and appropriateness of the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) as the mediating and facilitating body for the DPA, especially since the organization has proved unable to protect Darfurians during the conflict. In addition, AMIS observers at the workshop were uninformed about the status of the DDDC Preparatory Committee that AMIS was to convene 30 days after the signing of the DPA.

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Comment  
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¶5. Despite moving ahead with such workshops in South Darfur in coordination with AU local participants, UNMIS seems to not be fully coordinating with the AU designees for the DPA at the Khartoum level. In recent meetings with donors in Khartoum, after the occurrence of this workshop, AU stated that they were unaware of DPA and DDDC workshop initiatives in South Darfur. Yet UNMIS on the ground believes they are coordinating efforts, and thus are moving ahead. For the time being, no party, particularly the AU or UNMIS, has clarity on how the DDDC will be organized and implemented. UNMIS is using these workshops in South Darfur to review only what is written in the DPA on the DDDC for participants. This is a limited effort that may confuse matters in the short term and leave many questions unanswered by the participants. UNMIS and the entire UN DPA Team need to improve and quicken coordination efforts with the AU at all levels.

¶6. While promotion of the DPA remains a considerable challenge, the DDDC workshop demonstrated that civil society will assemble to have a lively debate on both the DPA and the DDDC. These gatherings are opportunities to update participants on actions with respect to deadlines, formation of committees, and future meetings. The meetings are also opportunities to correct inaccuracies and misperceptions about what is and is not included in the DPA. UNMIS South Darfur is planning to hold weekly workshops for the next two months, with the first several held in Nyala and later workshops held in other localities of South Darfur. UNMIS North and West Darfur are reportedly planning similar events. UNMIS South Darfur moved ahead earlier due to availability of funds in its budget.

¶7. In addition to first coordinating all future efforts with the AU, as described in para five, UNMIS can improve future workshops by building better understanding of what can be achieved by the DDDC. In future workshops, UNMIS must also improve how the role

and goals of the DDDC are explained. For example, the key, tangible purposes of the DDDC should be clearly illustrated, such as explaining political functions like Qacting as a mechanism of last resort to break deadlocks on specific issuesQ and Qestablishing local mechanisms for conflict prevention and promotion of reconciliationQ (DPA Article 31, section 480, lines (a) and (b)). In addition, UNMIS should take the opportunity at the workshops to disseminate copies of the DPA to the participants; not doing so was a critical oversight at the July 5 event.

STEINFELD